

## **Report from Hertford Civic Society Committee on the Past Year**

Here follows a summary of our activities since March 2023.

More indepth information is available on our website [Hertford Civic Society](#) but please do email with any queries.

- We wrote to Network Rail regarding the much needed lift for Hertford North, unfortunately there is still no confirmed date for installation.
- We wrote to Network Rail about our concerns regarding the deteriorating state of the porte cochere at Hertford Estate Railway Station, the Conservation Officer at East Herts Council was also alerted to the deterioration. Repairs have sadly still not started. A planning application is currently awaiting determination regarding the station buffers and fluted columns, we have added a supportive comment. 3/25/0177/LBC
- Supported Folly Island Residents who presented a petition to East Herts Council on 16 October regarding proposed changes to waste collection involving the deployment of wheelie bins which will negatively impact on the picturesque conservation area. We understand residents will continue to lobby for an alternative solution.
- We have been in touch with CALA Homes who have agreed to meet with us once the pre planning agreement has been signed with East Herts Council for the Leahoe site.
- A committee member remains in communication with Mr Brunt regarding the Quarry End Manor site in Hertingfordbury. Mr Brunt gave a presentation to Hertingfordbury Residents to outline his plans. Richard Threlfall, Suzanne Rutland Barsby and Jan Goodeve also attended.
- The list of sites submitted to EHDC in their call for sites has now been published, we will participate in the future public consultations relating to Hertford also consulting with our membership as the review of the district plan progresses. Members should note that just because a site has been put forward it does not necessarily mean it will be developed just that it is a possibility.
- Several committee members also attended the public meeting regarding a neighbourhood plan for Castle Ward, some will participate in working groups which have now been established. Neighbourhood plans are however subservient to District Plans. Additionally, there are many conservation area appraisals already in place across our historic town which will continue to be important reference documents.

- Commented on several planning applications including those for Madford Retail Estate (Matalan and Wickes), 33 North Road where subsequent unauthorised works were also halted and advised members on others. More recently we have commented on the proposals for 138 Fore Street.
- Attended the Development Management Committee for the Bengo Field planning application and watched others of interest to us via webcast.
- Held the 2024 Hertford Civic Awards with the involvement of a panel of members and distinguished external figure as lead assessor (Martin Hamilton, Chair Civic Voice). We should like to thank all those who kindly gave up their time. Presentations have been made to both BEAM and Lea Wharf, the plaques for both have now also been installed. There was also some local media coverage in Axis Magazine, The Flyer Magazine and on social media.
- Speaker Events: Tim Hagyard on Hertfordshire Chalk Streams; Nick Blatchley - on Highway Robberies, Nick De Bois & Mary Sykes on The Visitor Economy, Josh Dean MP on Housing. We would be pleased to hear any suggestions for future speakers.
- Aylesbury Civic Society will be visiting Hertford in June and we are liaising with them to ensure that they have a short enjoyable visit on their way to the Henry Moore Foundation.

### **Parliament Square Fountain**

The fountain is in need of some restoration and we will be both getting quotes for the necessary works to repair the stonework and exploring possible funding options. It is hoped that both Hertford Town Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund will be supportive. If you would like to find out more about the fountain there is on our website some fascinating information about it and its designer.

### **Planning & Local Government Reform**

Planning and infrastructure reform and proposals to remove some decision making from local planning committees and councils is something that has been in the news and this is something we will both monitor and try to keep up to date with. Local Government reform has also been announced with district councils to be abolished and unitary councils established. This will obviously also have a major impact on decision making processes locally, we wait to see how things will be organised in Hertfordshire going forward. It is anticipated that there could be two or three unitary councils across Hertfordshire. In any event most staff at County Hall have already been relocated to

Stevenage though many still work from home on a regular basis we understand again reducing the demand for office space.

### **Hertford Civic Society Committee**

Members: Margaret Anthony, Terry Betts, Peter Godfrey, Jan Goodeve, Mike Howarth, Milena Nuti, Geoffrey Rice, Suzanne Rutland Barsby, Anna Stanton, Richard Threlfall

Sue Jones decided to step down from the committee after many years of editorial work for the Civic Society but fortunately for us she still helps with refreshments at talks.

Thank you Sue.

We would welcome expressions of interest from others wanting to join the main committee or to help with specific tasks. We would like some additional content for the website, perhaps someone has some time to write articles, deliver leaflets or take additional photographs so that we have a library of photos of our town for use with future articles. Perhaps someone would like to organise social events or perhaps provide a link between HCS and Panshanger Park.